



# **NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL**

**MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA**

## **THESIS**

**NORMS VERSUS SECURITY:  
WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO JAPAN'S  
VIEW OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS?**

by

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March 2017

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**NORMS VERSUS SECURITY: WHAT IS MORE IMPORTANT TO JAPAN'S  
VIEW OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS?**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The United States has continued to decrease its nuclear arsenal, which will affect the reliability of the extended deterrent it has provided to its allies. One of the allies, Japan, faces an ever-changing security environment. The question then becomes this: How would Japan react to a major reduction in the U.S. nuclear arsenal? Based on three cases studies, Japan will only choose a nuclear option if the U.S. has a major reduction, and North Korea and China continue their trajectory in regard to both their nuclear and conventional forces.

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## **LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS**

ASDF	Air Self Defense Force
BMD	Ballistic Missile Defense
GSDF	Ground Self Defense Force
ICBM	Intercontinental Ballistic Missile
IRBM	Intermediate-range Ballistic Missile
ISAB	International Security Advisory Board
KPA	Korean People's Army
MRBM	Medium-range Ballistic Missile
MSDF	Maritime Self Defense Force
NNWS	Non-Nuclear Weapon State
NPT	Non-Proliferation Treaty
NWS	Nuclear Weapon State
PKO	Peace Keeping Operations
PRC	People's Republic of China
SDF	Self Defense Force
SLBM	Submarine-launched Ballistic Missile
SRBM	Short-range Ballistic Missile
START	Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty
U.K.	United Kingdom
UNSC	United Nations Security Council
WWII	World War II

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

### **A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION**

How would Japan react to a major reduction in the U.S. nuclear arsenal?<sup>1</sup> The United States has said that it will continue providing extended deterrence to its allies, but it has also said that it will move toward reduced nuclear weapons. What impact will this have on Japan's propensity to acquire nuclear weapons?

### **B. IMPORTANCE**

Nuclear weapons empower a nation to use an incredible force to protect itself from other nations. Economically, many of the northeast Asian countries have increased their global standing since the East Asian financial crisis. Japan, for instance, has the third largest economy in the world; however, it is still not considered one of the world's superpowers.<sup>2</sup> Although Japan has a large economy and the resources to develop nuclear weapons, it has chosen not to obtain nuclear weapons. If Japan were to pursue its own nuclear deterrence, Japan would have to make major changes to its own security policies. At the same time, the changes would affect many political issues such as the U.S.-Japan Security alliance, Japan's standing in the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT), and Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution.

There are many barricades to Japan acquiring nuclear weapons; the most important include Article 9, the NPT, and domestic and international opinion. If a major reduction of the U.S. nuclear arsenal occurs, would Japan overcome these barriers and acquire nuclear weapons? There are two schools of thought on this subject. The norms school believes that current policies and the Japanese commitment to peace will prevent Japan from nuclearizing, even if the U.S. draws down. The norms school argues Japan will maintain the status quo and not try to obtain nuclear weapons because of its taboo

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<sup>1</sup> S. Paul Kapur, "The Effects on South Asia of Deep U.S. Nuclear Reductions," *The Nonproliferation Review* 20, (2013): 279–288. For the purpose of this research, I use Kapur's definition of "major reduction," which is described as roughly 1,000 to 2,000 accountable strategic warheads.

<sup>2</sup> Data pulled from the International Monetary Fund Database World Economic Outlook Database [www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2016/02/weodata/weorept.aspx](http://www.imf.org/external/pubs/ft/weo/2016/02/weodata/weorept.aspx).

against nuclear weapons. Conversely, the security-based school believes that Japan will acquire nuclear weapons despite policy obstacles if the U.S. follows through with a major reduction of its nuclear arsenal. The second argument comes from the thought that security concerns, such as China's modernizing military and North Korea's accelerating nuclear weapons program, will put pressure on the country to develop nuclear weapons.

When translated, Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution reads,

Aspiring sincerely to an international peace based on justice and order, the Japanese people forever renounce war as a sovereign right of the nation and the threat or use of force as means of settling international disputes. (2) To accomplish the aim of the preceding paragraph, land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential, will never be maintained. The right of belligerency of the state will not be recognized.<sup>3</sup>

One interpretation of Article 9 is that it bans Japan from maintaining any power projecting force. Although many experts consider nuclear weapons defensive weapons, the international community may perceive Japan's arming itself with nuclear weapons as an aggressive and offensive action. The defensive capability of nuclear weapons lies in their ability to deter a threat from using conventional and non-conventional weapons for fear of retaliation by nuclear weapons. One could say that the discussion of Article 9 can fall under the norms or security side of the debate. If one were to believe that nuclear weapons were offensive in nature, then Article 9 prohibits Japan from obtaining nuclear weapons and Japan would need to amend Article 9. The change would have to allow the country to pursue a more offensive security policy. At the same time, if one believes that nuclear weapons are for defensive purposes, then one could argue that Article 9 allows Japan to seek a nuclear option for the changing security environment.

Japan signed the NPT in 1970 and ratified it in 1976. The Non-Proliferation Treaty is an international treaty that focuses on three main objectives: "1) prevent the spread of nuclear weapons and weapons technology, 2) promote cooperation in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy, and 3) further the goal of achieving nuclear disarmament

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<sup>3</sup> James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 2002), 540.



and general and complete disarmament.”<sup>4</sup> The treaty determines which states are to be nuclear-weapon states (NWS) and non-nuclear-weapon states (NNWS). One hundred ninety nations have signed and ratified this treaty, including NWS such as the United States, the United Kingdom, Russia, China, and France. Under the treaty, NWSs cannot transfer nuclear weapons, and NNWSs cannot receive, manufacture, or acquire nuclear weapons.

The NPT is important to the discussion because it includes policies that do not allow Japan to seek a nuclear option. Therefore, it falls under the norms school of thought. If one were to believe that Japan would obtain nuclear weapons for security purposes, the NPT would become a barrier that Japan would have to overcome. A person would have to argue that the changing security environment would be enough to cause Japan to either become an authorized NWS (recognized in the NPT), or completely withdraw from the NPT.

The norms side of the debate would argue that Japan’s wartime atrocities in the first half of the 20th century could lead Japan’s neighbors to interpret any Japanese effort in establishing a power-projecting military or obtaining nuclear weapons as a highly provocative act. This has the potential to be met with aggression or have a destabilizing effect in the North East Asian region. A nuclear Japan would create instability within the North East Asian region. Japan would no longer be seen as the peaceful nation it has been since the end of World War II. Domestic factors may affect the country’s decision to nuclearize, but the security side of the debate would argue that potential threats from both North Korea and China could create an uncertain security environment and push the country toward proliferation of weapons. If the United States were to shrink its nuclear umbrella that covers Japan, Japan might then seek to obtain its own deterrent in the form of nuclear weapons. This thesis will determine what Japan is likely to do in the event of a major reduction of U.S. nuclear weapons by examining whether it has acted primarily on the basis of security concerns or normative concerns from WWII to the present.

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<sup>4</sup> “Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons,” Federation of American Scientist, accessed July 6, 2016, <http://www.fas.org/nuke/control/npt/text/npt2.htm>.

## C. LITERATURE REVIEW

Most of the current body of literature on Japan and nuclear weapons focuses on two major arguments. The first argument is that Japan will refrain from obtaining nuclear weapons because of the taboo against nuclear weapons in the country. Authors such as Emma Chanlett-Avery, Mary Beth Nikitin, and Katsuhisa Furukawa support this side of the debate, because each views norm such as the NPT, Article 9, domestic and political opinion, and Japan's reliance of the U.S. nuclear umbrella as essential to Japan. They believe that even with the changing security environment Japan will refrain from pursuing a nuclear option.

Emma Chanlett-Avery and Mary Beth Nikitin argue in their Congressional Research Service (CRS) report that even though previous security related issues such as dispatching military equipment and personnel and development of missile defense systems have come into play, and the outcome showed a more aggressive Japan, the likelihood of Japan considering new possibilities for nuclear options is still slim.<sup>5</sup> The same report showed they believe that the possibility is minimal because of domestic factors such as public and elite opinions, constitutional constraints, and external factors such as international law (e.g., the NPT).

Katsuhisa Furukawa's work *Japan's Policy and the Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective* concludes that there is no likelihood of Japan going nuclear if the security environment remained the same.<sup>6</sup> After North Korea's nuclear test on October 9, 2006, he wrote in "Not Going Nuclear: Japan's Response to North Korea's Nuclear Test" that no leader in Japan would advocate pursuit of nuclear arms because the consensus is continued reliance on the U.S. extended deterrence.<sup>7</sup> Finally, his article "Nuclear Arms Control and Disarmament: Views among Japan's National Security Community" shows

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<sup>5</sup> Emma Chanlett-Avery and Mary Beth Nikitin, *Japan's Nuclear Future: Policy Debate, Prospects, and U.S. Interest* (CRS Report RL34487) (Washington, DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, 2009).

<sup>6</sup> Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective," *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics & Strategic Studies* 37 (2010).

<sup>7</sup> Katsuhisa Furukawa and Hajime Izumi, "Not Going Nuclear: Japan's Response to North Korea's Nuclear Test," *Arms Control Association*, Accessed August 5, 2016, [https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007\\_06/CoverStory](https://www.armscontrol.org/act/2007_06/CoverStory).

the conflicting views of the Japanese community wish to maintain the pacifist ideal of nuclear zero, and their belief that a reduction in the U.S. nuclear arsenal could be destabilizing to the region.<sup>8</sup> Even though Furukawa believes this could be destabilizing, he maintains that the Japanese should rely on the extended deterrence of the U.S.

The other side of the debate argues that security will be a factor that could lead to Japan starting a nuclear weapons program. Authors such as Dong-Joon Jo, Erik Gartzke, and Stephen Meyer believe that security concerns are what cause countries to pursue a nuclear option.

The authors Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke say that security concerns and technology are important in determining whether a nation will create a weapons program while politics, economics, and security are the factors that explain why a nation will possess nuclear weapons.<sup>9</sup> One of the most recent perceived threats came from North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT in January of 2003 and its announcement that it possessed nuclear weapons in February of 2005. As a nuclear weapon state, North Korea not only poses a threat to the U.S. and South Korea, but it also poses a threat to stability in the region. Another country Japan has had to consider in relationship to its nuclear arms program is the growing hegemonic nation of China. Ten months before China's first nuclear test in 1964, General Pierre Gallois of France was asked how would China's nuclear weapons program affect Japan's standing in the world. General Gallois argued that Japan would have to choose between strengthening ties with the U.S., moving slowly out from the umbrella of the U.S. or developing its own nuclear weapons program.<sup>10</sup> This statement would imply that as China continues its nuclear weapons program, the nation would potentially become a threat to Japan.

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<sup>8</sup> Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Nuclear Arms Control and Disarmament: Views among Japan's National Security Community," *Security Challenges* 6, no. 4 (2010): 33–54.

<sup>9</sup> Dong-Joon Jo and Erik Gartzke, "Determinants of Nuclear Weapons Proliferation," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 51, no.1 (February 2007): 167.

<sup>10</sup> John Welfield, *Japan and Nuclear China: Japan's Reaction to China's Nuclear Weapons*, (Canberra: Australian National University Press, 1970), 1.

In Stephen Meyer's book *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation*, he hypothesizes motive conditions for nations acquiring nuclear weapons.<sup>11</sup> He gave four incentives and then translated them into motivations, one of which was the military security incentive. He states that a country confronted with a military threat from one or more foreign powers might seek the nuclear option to increase its military capabilities.<sup>12</sup> These threats could be an adversary that is nuclear armed or an adversary that has an overwhelming conventional military.<sup>13</sup> Therefore, when the former chief of staff of Japan's Air Defense Forces stated, "Japan should seek to arm itself with nuclear weapons," in response to North Korea and China's growing military, an argument can be made that he has a legitimate claim.<sup>14</sup>

Prime Minister Morihiro Hosokawa stated in his article "Are U.S. Troops in Japan Needed?" that "it is in the best interest of the United States, so long as it does not wish to see Japan withdraw from the NPT and develop its own nuclear deterrent, to maintain its alliance with Japan and continue to provide a nuclear umbrella."<sup>15</sup> When he stated this, he was discussing issues of U.S. forces in Japan. While he claimed that Japan could defend itself and that the need for U.S. troops was lessening, this statement signifies that security would be an issue. With his statement, one could argue that if Japan does not see a credible U.S. umbrella, there are political elites that believe Japan could see other countries, such as China or North Korea, as threatening enough to advance a nuclear option. Also, T.V. Paul's book *Power Versus Prudence* makes a case for a politician being able to sway public opinion toward a nuclear option if they were able to show that a security threat existed and a nuclear deterrent were not available.<sup>16</sup>

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<sup>11</sup> Stephen M. Meyer, *The Dynamics of Nuclear Proliferation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1984), 44–74.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid

<sup>13</sup> Ibid

<sup>14</sup> Sachiko Sakamaki, "North Korean Atomic Tests Lift Lid on Japan's Nuclear 'Taboo,'" accessed February 22, 2017, <https://clareswinney.wordpress.com/2009/05/29/north-korean-atomic-tests-lift-lid-on-japan%E2%80%99s-nuclear-%E2%80%98taboo%E2%80%99/>.

<sup>15</sup> Morihiro Hosokawa, "Are U.S. Troops in Japan Needed? Reforming the Alliance," *Foreign* 4 (July/August 1998): 5.

<sup>16</sup> T.V. Paul, *Power Versus Prudence: Why Nations Forgo Nuclear Weapons* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University, 2000), 56.

Some authors, such as Kenneth Waltz, argue that states may feel pressure to balance against other nations that have nuclear weapons.<sup>17</sup> Others like Sonali Singh and Christopher Way argue against that thought in their work “The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test.” Singh and Way argue that a “credible security guarantee” from a powerful ally would be required to null the need for nuclear weapons.<sup>18</sup> Therefore, as states see the security guarantees decreasing, there will be greater incentive to obtain these weapons.

Ultimately, the question becomes what will Japan choose? Those who take the side of norms believe that despite the changing security environment, Japan should not and will not obtain nuclear weapons. On the other side of the argument, Japan should seek its own nuclear deterrent to compete with current and possible future threats if the U.S. withdraws or significantly reduces its nuclear umbrella.

#### **D. METHODS AND SOURCES**

Case studies will be used to determine what is more important to Japan: maintaining its policy norms or developing security capacity against threats. Each case study used will be from a point where the country had to make a decision on a defense-related issue. If the decision makers were able to maintain the status quo, then this will be interpreted as norms being more important to the country, resulting in Japan not obtaining nuclear weapons. If these case studies reveal that policies were changed or reinterpreted to create a more robust or offensive military for Japan, then these incidences will be considered as indicators that increased security capability is more important to the nation. This would imply Japan is likely to seek nuclear weapons as a way to maintain a credible nuclear deterrence. The first case study used will be the establishment of the Self Defense Forces. This was one of the first political debates where the question of Article 9 and the definition of self-defense were analyzed. The second case study will be the deployment of the SDF to Iraq. In 2004, the SDF deployed to Iraq for peacekeeping operations. The

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<sup>17</sup> Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (New York: Random House, 1979), 105

<sup>18</sup> Sonali Singh and Christopher R Way, “The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test,” *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no.6 (2004):859-885.

deployment caused many to question how far self-defense extends, and divided many politicians on whether the deployment was constitutionally justified. The third study centers on the development of ballistic missile defense (BMD) in Japan. Japan has made significant developments in its BMD capabilities, which were established for defensive purposes. At the same time, BMD systems have offensive capabilities, which could be seen as rearmament of the Japanese military. Each case represents a time where policy makers in Japan debated over issues involving security and had to decide whether to maintain their norms, such as upholding Article 9, or developing a more robust security capacity was of much more concern. Multiple scholarly books, articles, and journals will be used to determine the government's position on nuclear policies. Selected polls will be used to show public opinion about Japan's military and changes that have been made throughout its history and its changing security environment. Each of these measures will be considered to establish consistencies or differences between political parties.

#### **E. ORGANIZATION**

The thesis begins with an overview of why countries would choose a nuclear option. It gives a brief history of the five nuclear weapon states listed with the NPT, and why they chose to obtain the bomb. This shows the relationship to those countries and Japan's current position. The next portion of the thesis focuses on the U.S.-Japan alliance by using government documents to explain the security policy between Japan and the United States. After this, the thesis examines Japan's status within the North East Asian region and why the country has decided not to make strides toward nuclear armament. Finally, the thesis outlines how Japan could pursue the nuclear option and some of the consequences of the country would go down that path.

## **II. UNDERSTANDING WHY COUNTRIES CHOOSE THE NUCLEAR OPTION**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will identify why some countries would develop nuclear weapons. As part of the discussion, this chapter will examine what researchers believe would cause a country to nuclearize today and why countries developed nuclear weapons in the past. It is an important issue because the norms versus security debate can be seen from the start of the nuclear arms race to the eventual establishment of the NPT and major reduction of nuclear weapons.

### **B. WHY WOULD COUNTRIES NUCLEARIZE?**

It is important to first understand what research has shown to be possible reasons for countries to choose a nuclear option. Most research and realists argue that countries tend to go down this path for security reasons. Kurt Campbell, Robert J. Einhorn, and Mitchell B. Reiss described five factors that would lead a country in this direction: “1) a change in the direction of U.S. foreign and security policy, 2) a breakdown of the global nonproliferation regime, 3) the erosion of regional or global security, 4) domestic imperatives, and 5) increasing in the availability of technology.”<sup>19</sup> He explained that many of America’s allies depend on U.S. policies when determining their security and choosing not to obtain a nuclear weapon. Although the U.S. is a critical factor, it is not the only factor. In addition, not all five factors would have to happen for a country to choose the nuclear option. Scott Sagan created three models on why a country will build or abstain from the nuclear option. His security model showed that countries might build nuclear weapons for national security, such as China developing nuclear weapons for fear of a possible attack from the United States, and London and Paris building weapons for the perceived Soviet threat.<sup>20</sup> The domestic politics model argued that nuclear weapons

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<sup>19</sup> Kurt M. Campbell, Robert J. Einhorn, and Mitchell B. Reiss, *The Nuclear Tipping Point: Why States Reconsider Their Nuclear Choices* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute Press, 2004), 20.

<sup>20</sup> Scott D. Sagan, “Why Do States Build Nuclear Weapons?: Three Models in Search of a Bomb,” *International Security* 21, no. 3 (Winter, 1996–1997): 54–86, <http://www.jstor.org/stable/2539273>.

could be used as a way to serve the interest of multiple nation states.<sup>21</sup> Finally, his norms model believes that states obtain nuclear weapons because they are symbolic of a states “modernity and identity.”<sup>22</sup> While he agreed that most cases of proliferation could be argued with the security model, he also argued that “multicausality” was the primary factor.

### **C. WHY DID THE BIG 5 DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS?**

Understanding why the five nuclear weapon states developed a program will be able to give some insight to possible reasons for Japan choosing to go down the same path. The five nuclear weapon states’ programs started in the 1940s, first with the United States and the last being China. The reasons the countries developed the weapons tend to circle around security, but some also saw the weapons as a sign of status and prestige in the international realm.<sup>23</sup> Like Japan, two of the NWS (France and the United Kingdom) are allies with the U.S. and were under the U.S. extended deterrence when they started their programs. In relation to the Norms versus Security debate, if they were to have observed a norms rationale, the two countries would have maintained the status quo of the time and relied on the U.S. for defense. The two countries felt security was of greater concern and relying on the U.S. would not have been in their best interest. There are also similarities between the threat perception of the U.S. that China saw and the threat perception of China that Japan may see.

#### **1. The United States**

In 1945, the United States conducted the first successful detonation of a nuclear device, and in that same year, the only two nuclear weapons ever used in war were detonated over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This was the beginning of the United States period of dominance when it came to military power. For this brief period before the Soviet’s first nuclear detonation, the United States focus was on air power. The quick

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 63.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 73. Scott Sagan’s norms model is somewhat different from the norms argument of the Norms versus Security debate. His norms model not only sees norms as a restraint but also as reason a country would obtain nuclear weapons for prestige.

<sup>23</sup> Stephen M. Younger, *The Bomb: A New History* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 43



surrender of Japan after the detonation over Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the sheer power of the atomic bomb, gave the United States a sense of invincibility. This would lead to the establishment of the Strategic Air Command. A significant drawback of the nuclear bomb was the delivery method. The device could only be carried by air during this period. On the other hand, the atomic bomb was less expensive when compared to conventional weapons. However, the United States was arguably the most powerful nation with the nuclear bomb, the country wanted to focus on stopping wars rather than waging wars. The atomic bomb could be used as a device for coercion. National security would be seen as the ability to strike an enemy with an overwhelming and devastating attack if they were to take any aggressive acts against the U.S. Jonathan Winkler found that the increase in the U.S. nuclear stockpile was a result of many reasons, but highlighted three. First, the U.S. did not have accurate information on Soviet industrial forces. Second, they feared Soviet conventional forces and saw tactical weapons as a way to counter the threat. Third, President Eisenhower wanted to preserve peace with a large nuclear arsenal. Eisenhower believed that threatening nuclear war deterred adversaries and prevented allies from acting.<sup>24</sup> In the end, the U.S. developed nuclear weapons as a form of security. Even the first use of the atomic bomb was to break the Japanese spirit and coerce them into surrendering. Although nuclear weapons could be used as a tool for coercion, little research shows Japan seeking that ability and as of writing this thesis, Japan has not declared war on any country. However, Japan may seek a nuclear option as a way to maintain peace as the U.S. wanted to do in the past.

## **2. Soviet Union / Russia**

The Soviet nuclear weapons program began in 1943 during World War II once the Soviets learned of the United States' research through espionage.<sup>25</sup> The acceleration of the Soviet nuclear weapons program can be seen as a direct result of the U.S. nuclear detonation over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The Soviet Union was looking to maintain its status as a superpower with the United States, the country's military rival, and feared

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<sup>24</sup> Jonathan Reed Winkler, "Why the Stockpiles?," *A World Free Of Nuclear Weapons* 15, no. 2 (2010): 25.

<sup>25</sup> Stephen M. Younger, *The Bomb: A New History* (New York: HarperCollins, 2009), 33.

containment from American allies.<sup>26</sup> At first, the Soviets would try to downplay the value of nuclear weapons in the international realm. The Soviets opposed the Baruch Plan of 1948 and wanted the United States to eliminate all nuclear arms rather than the U.S. giving its weapons to the United Nations. At this time, the United States had less than sixty nuclear weapons, and the Soviets were working on their own nuclear weapons program. In 1949, the Soviet Union conducted its first successful test of a nuclear weapon. After this, both the United States and the Soviet Union began to increase spending on development of higher quality and greater quantities of nuclear weapons. Currently, Russia is the second largest nuclear power, and nuclear weapons remain an essential part of their military strategy.<sup>27</sup> Japan is not a position of rivalry with another country. Even after North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT and announcement that it had a nuclear weapon, Japan would discuss the nuclear option, but would still rely on the extended deterrence of the U.S. A nuclear Japan could also destabilize the region and possibly lead to an arms race between the country and either China or North Korea.

### **3. Great Britain/United Kingdom**

The U.K. was actually the first country to look into the development of nuclear weapons. Tube Alloy was the codename given to the research and development program, which, due to budget issues, would eventually be assimilated into the Manhattan Project. The United States would then take over the project and stop sharing research with the U.K.<sup>28</sup> After World War II, the U.S. would further restrict information regarding nuclear technology with the McMahon Act even though it originally agreed to share information at the start of the Manhattan project with the Quebec Agreement. Winston Churchill believed that if the U.K. did not develop its own nuclear deterrent, it would lose its place as a first-class power, and the country would have to rely on the United States for the

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<sup>26</sup>Ibid.

<sup>27</sup> Matthew Moran and Heather W. Williams, "Keeping Up Appearances: National Narratives and Nuclear Policy in France and Russia," *Defense Studies* 13, no. 2 (2013): 206.

<sup>28</sup> Graham Farmelo, *Churchill's Bomb: How the United States Overtook Britain in the First Nuclear Arms Race* (New York: Basic Books, 2013).

effectiveness of their defense.<sup>29</sup> Historian Margaret Gowing believed the British developed the bomb because they felt that

Britain must possess so climacteric a weapon in order to deter an atomically armed enemy, a feeling that Britain as a great power must acquire all major new weapons, a feeling that atomic weapons were a manifestation of the scientific and technological superiority on which Britain's strength, so deficient if measured in sheer numbers of men, must depend.<sup>30</sup>

Japan, like the U.K., is a close ally of the U.S. and can potentially obtain information on technology regarding nuclear weapons. However, Japan is not seeking to become a world power through military force. The country is mainly seeking to become a “normal” nation through modernization of its current military.<sup>31</sup> During the period when the U.K. developed its first nuclear weapon, the country was concerned with the Soviet Union. Part of their concern with the U.S. nuclear umbrella was that even though the U.S. could attack the Soviet Union with nuclear weapons, the Soviet Union could not strike the U.S. back. The United Kingdom feared this made them a potential target for retaliation and decided the country needed its own nuclear deterrent.<sup>32</sup> North Korea was able to launch a missile that reached within 200 nautical miles of Japan, creating concern for the country. In the same way, the U.K. was concerned that a retaliatory strike against the U.S. would fall on its country, the Japanese may see the same in relation to North Korea.

#### **4. France**

France has the third largest nuclear arsenal after the United States and Russia. France began its nuclear weapons program after the Suez Crisis. After the international fallout, the French believed that developing nuclear weapons was necessary for them to

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Margaret Gowing, *Independence and Deterrence*, cited in Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, 74.

<sup>31</sup> Richard A. Bitzinger, “Military Modernization in the Asia-Pacific: Assessing New Capabilities.” in *Asia's Rising Power and America's Continued Purpose*, ed. by Ashley J. Tellis, Andrew Marble, and Travis Tanner, (Washington, DC: The National Bureau of Asian Research, 2010-2011), 82.

<sup>32</sup> Thomas C. Reed and Danny B. Stillman, *The Nuclear Express: A Political History of the Bomb and Its Proliferation*, (Minneapolis: Zenith Press, 2009), 50.

maintain their independence and support their interests. President Charles de Gaulle would be one of the pivotal voices pushing for research and development in the program. Since the development of their first nuclear weapon, France has come to see the weapons as a symbol of prestige.<sup>33</sup> The weapons have become a major pillar of France's defense strategy, which was shown with former President Jacques Chirac's nuclear deterrence doctrine announced in January 2006.<sup>34</sup> France felt being able to have its own nuclear deterrent for security was more important than a security guarantee from another state. Japan is concerned with the U.S. extended deterrence and has sought reassurance of it in response to North Korea's nuclear weapons program. There has not been any invasion of Japan that has put pressure on the country to seek a nuclear deterrent as in the case of France.

## **5. China**

China began its nuclear weapons program in the late 1950s. It is believed that China pursued the nuclear option as a result of the First Taiwan Strait Crisis. Some scholars think that the backing down of the PRC was partly because of the fear of an American nuclear attack. Although China has agreed to decrease its nuclear arsenal in accordance with the NPT, it is believed it has have doubled its weapon stockpile.<sup>35</sup> Susan Turner Haynes showed in her research that the main reason for China's buildup of nuclear weapons is mainly because of a perceived threat, in particular the United States.<sup>36</sup> Japan sees China's growing military as a concern for security, just as China saw the United States as a concern when the country developed its nuclear weapons program. This will be discussed more in the next chapter; China could be a factor that leads Japan to pursuing a nuclear option.

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<sup>33</sup> Moran, Matthew and Heather W. Williams. "Keeping up Appearances: National Narratives and Nuclear Policy in France and Russia." *Defense Studies* 13, no. 2 (June 2013): 192–215.

<sup>34</sup> David S Yost, "France's Nuclear Doctrine," *International Affairs* (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944-) 82, No. 4 (2006).

<sup>35</sup> Susan Turner Haynes, "China's Nuclear Threat Perception," *Strategic Studies Quarterly*, (Summer 2016): 25.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid. Susan Turner Haynes's article breaks down how China perceives other countries based on intent and means. The article claims the U.S. to be the "heavyweight" with both intent and extensive means.

## **D. CONCLUSION**

As we can see the five nuclear weapon states were focused on security when developing their nuclear weapons and creating their doctrines for employment. Most debates were not about why or if a country should develop nuclear weapons, but on how they should be used. France was focused on deterring outside threats from other major powers. The U.K. was concerned with remaining one of the major powers, not having to rely on the U.S. for protection, and with a retaliatory strike of the Soviet's against the U.S. China was trying to defend itself against a strike from the U.S., fearing that not having the bomb left them vulnerable to an attack. The Soviet Union would try to maintain an equal standing with the U.S. from a strategic military perspective. Finally, the United States would not only maintain but also use nuclear weapons as a means of coercion. In the case of Japan, is security a big enough aspect to push for a nuclear option? The current threats to Japan are China and North Korea. The former being one of the Nuclear Weapon States, and one of the five that is actually believed to be increasing their nuclear arsenal. The latter being the only country to withdraw from the NPT and currently pursuing development of nuclear weapon. Japan is concerned with deterring these threats. Right now, the other option for Japan would be to maintain its current defense doctrine of relying on the U.S. for protection from a nuclear threat. In the next chapter, there will be a discussion on the factors affecting Japan. It will show that Japan is not completely constrained by its constitution, although domestic opinion will be a factor deterring the push for nuclear weapons. It will also show that Japan is concerned with its security in relation to the U.S. extended deterrence, and that the threat of North Korea and China could potentially sway the country toward a nuclear option.

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### **III. WHY WOULD JAPAN GO DOWN THIS PATH?**

#### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will focus on some of the factors that could lead to Japan choosing a nuclear option and the reasons Japan has not chosen this path. As stated previously, the two sides of the debate focus on norms versus security, with security being the reason a nation would choose to go down this path. Two factors under security are a perceived threat from an outside force and an uncertain defensive posture. This thesis will consider a perceived threat to be anything that Japan knows or has known to be a possible issue for their security environment. An uncertain defensive posture would be possible changes to Japan's defense where the outcome cannot be accurately determined. Both could come into effect with regard to Japan.

#### **B. THE JAPAN-U.S. SECURITY TREATY**

With Article 9 in place, Japan would have no standing military that could be used to resolve international disputes. Although Japan's Self-Defense Force (SDF) is equipped with conventional weapons, they can only be used in the defense of national security. This removed Japan's ability for pre-emptive strikes, placed a restriction on Japan's ability to defend itself, presented Japan as a pacifist country, and would be the basis for future debates. In order to maintain some kind of military, the Japanese and the United States entered into an agreement known as the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security between the United States and Japan. The treaty, which was divided into five articles, stated that the United States would be allowed to move forces onto Japanese territories to support its East Asian military presence. The agreement also prohibited Japan from providing other countries with bases or rights without first receiving permission from the U.S. The treaty also requires the U.S. to come to the aid of Japan if the nation were attacked by another.<sup>37</sup> The treaty is considered one of the pillars of Japan's national defense. Japan is also one of the Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS),

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<sup>37</sup> "Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed July 6, 2016, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/refl.html>.

and signed the NPT under the pretense that the country would be protected from nuclear attack by the extended deterrence of the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Japan signed the NPT in 1970, but did not ratify the treaty till 1976. Katsuhisa Furukawa found that Japan wanted to at least maintain a “latent nuclear capability,” which would force the U.S. to provide a nuclear deterrent to sustain the Japan-U.S. security.<sup>38</sup>

## **C. WHY JAPAN HAS CHOSEN NOT TO OBTAIN NUCLEAR WEAPONS**

### **1. Domestic Opinion**

Any issue revolving around nuclear topics has always been met with controversy. Domestic opinion tends to favor continuation of current policies where the country abstains from nuclear weapons. Many scholars refer to this commitment to not pursue a nuclear option as a “nuclear allergy.” A major setback for the proliferation side of the debate was the Fukushima nuclear disaster of 2011. This major incident was when a tsunami disabled the power supply and cooling of three reactors at Fukushima Daiichi.<sup>39</sup> Although no deaths were caused due to acute radiation syndrome, many anti-nuclear protests were made. A poll conducted in 2011 and again in 2012 showed that 70 percent of the Japanese believed that the use of nuclear power should be reduced.<sup>40</sup> In September of 2011, an estimated 20,000 protesters marched in Tokyo to seek for the government to no longer pursue nuclear power as an option.<sup>41</sup> Even the district of Ohi was divided on whether to continue to use nuclear power, even though the community has thrived since the 1970s because of the nuclear plants. During the time of the incident the mayor of Ohi, Tokioka, became split on the idea. He wanted new guidelines for operations, but understood the reactors would eventually need to be restarted if the economy would be

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<sup>38</sup> Katsuhisa Furukawa, “Japan’s Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective,” *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics, & Studies* 37 (2012): 12.

<sup>39</sup> “Fukushima Accident,” World Nuclear Association, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://www.world-nuclear.org/information-library/safety-and-security/safety-of-plants/fukushima-accident.aspx>.

<sup>40</sup> “Japanese Wary of Nuclear Energy,” PewResearchCenter, accessed February 22, 2017. <http://www.pewglobal.org/2012/06/05/japanese-wary-of-nuclear-energy/>

<sup>41</sup> Malcolm Foster, “Thousands March Against Nuclear Power in Tokyo,” *Independent*, September 19, 2011, <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/world/asia/thousands-march-against-nuclear-power-in-tokyo-2357126.html>.



affected by the benefits of using the reactors.<sup>42</sup> Many have pointed to the pacifist education and survivors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki as factors affecting public opinion to remain opposed to the idea of nuclearizing.<sup>43</sup> Although the populations directly affected by the bombs are beginning to become smaller, their influence is still felt throughout the country. As Mike Mochizuki pointed out, the public ceremonies for Hiroshima and Nagasaki will make sure that the people of Japan will never forget.<sup>44</sup> Llewelyn Hughes noted that polling data showed only 21 percent of the population believed that Japan should have nuclear weapons in 1968 and those numbers would continually drop.<sup>45</sup> By 1994, her data would show that only nine percent of the population believed that Japan should have a nuclear weapon if North Korea had one. The paper noted that after the North Korean nuclear test of 2006, 46 percent of the public believed the question of nuclearizing should be debated, while 51 percent still opposed the idea.<sup>46</sup> For public opinion to change over the perception of nuclear weapons, international issues, such as a threat from another country, would have to be extreme.

## **2. Policy Constraints**

Japan ratified the NPT in 1970, and under the NPT, Japan is considered a non-nuclear weapon state (NNWS). Therefore, the country is unable to proliferate either on its own or from a nuclear weapon state (NWS). The only way would be for the country to withdraw from the treaty, which requires three months' notice. The only country to have ever withdrawn from the treaty is North Korea. Arguments have been made that Article 9 of the Japanese constitution does not allow country to obtain nuclear weapons because of

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<sup>42</sup> Martin Fackler, "Japan's Nuclear Energy Industry Nears Shutdown, at least for Now," *The New York Times*, March 8, 2012, <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/03/09/world/asia/japan-shutting-down-its-nuclear-power-industry.html>.

<sup>43</sup> Emma Chanlett-Avery et al., *Japan-U.S. Relation: Issues for Congress* (CRS Report No. RL33436) (Washington, DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, 2015), 7, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33436.pdf>.

<sup>44</sup> Mike M. Mochizuki, "Japan Tests the Nuclear Taboo," *Nonproliferation Review* 14, no. 2 (2007): 307, doi: 10.1080/10736700701379393

<sup>45</sup> Llewelyn Hughes, "Why Japan will not Go Nuclear (Yet): International and Domestic Constraints on the Nuclearization of Japan," *International Security*. 31, no.4 (Spring, 2007): 89, <http://www.jstor.org/dtsbl/4137566>.

<sup>46</sup> *Ibid.*, 89–90

its offensive capabilities, even though experts argue that the weapons have more of a defensive purpose. The meaning of defensive purpose being that having nuclear weapons creates an incentive for a state to not take military action against another through deterrence. Emma Chanlett-Avery and Mary Beth Nikitin believe that Article 9 is the most prominent factor precluding Japan from acquiring nuclear weapons because it prohibits Japan's "right to belligerency," but also wrote that the constitution could allow nuclear weapons for defensive purposes.<sup>47</sup> Foreign law specialist Sayuri Umeda did research on explaining Article 9 of the Japanese constitution. Umeda noted that paragraph 1 of Article 9 renounces war and paragraph 2 says that Japan can never maintain land forces, sea forces, air forces as well as other potentials for war.<sup>48</sup> Umeda agrees with other scholars and government officials that Article 9 does not prohibit Japan's right to self-defense and allows the country to expand its capability in the pursuit of defense.<sup>49</sup> Therefore, if one views nuclear weapons as defensive measures, the argument can be made that Article 9 does allow for the development of this capability. Japanese politicians such as Prime Minister Takei Fukuda and Prime Minister Shinzo Abe have even said that the constitution allows for nuclear weapons to be a possibility if they are in a minimum capacity like the Japanese Self Defense Force.<sup>50</sup>

Katsushi Furukawa described two parts of the Japan's nuclear, or non-nuclear, policy. One of the reasons Japan has chosen to shy away from the nuclear weapons is to support the three non-nuclear principles: non-production, non-possession, and non-introduction.<sup>51</sup> These principles were adopted by Prime Minister Eisaku Sato in the Diet session of 1967, and are almost identical to the requirements of a NNWS. These principles have been referred to multiple times since they were established, including by

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<sup>47</sup> Emma Chanlett-Avery and Mary Beth Nikitin *Japan's Nuclear Future: Policy Debate, Prospects, and U.S. Interest* (CRS Report RL34487) (Washington, DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, 2009), [www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/Japan\\_s\\_Nuclear\\_Future.pdf](http://www.voltairenet.org/IMG/pdf/Japan_s_Nuclear_Future.pdf).

<sup>48</sup> Sayuri Umeda, "Japan: Article 9 of the Constitution," The Law Library of Congress (February, 2006).

<sup>49</sup> Ibid.

<sup>50</sup> "Abe Cabinet Says Article 9 Does Not Ban Possessing, Using N-weapons," *Asahi Shimbun*, April 2, 2016, <http://www.asahi.com/ajw/articles/AJ201604020026.html/>.

<sup>51</sup> "Three Non-Nuclear Principles," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/policy/un/disarmament/nnp/index.html>.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe after the North Korean nuclear test in 2006. The second part of Japan's nuclear policy was declared by Prime Minister Sato in 1968. The Four Nuclear Pillars are "1) adhere to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles, 2) pursue global nuclear disarmament, 3) limit the use of nuclear energy to peaceful purposes, and 4) rely on the U.S. extended deterrence."<sup>52</sup> Japan is a strong advocate of promoting the peaceful use of nuclear power.

#### **D. WHAT WOULD CAUSE JAPAN TO PURSUE NUCLEAR WEAPONS?**

##### **1. The Shrinking of the U.S. Umbrella**

Former President Barak Obama outlined a goal of the United States becoming a nation with no nuclear weapons. He looked to move into consistency of Article 6 of the Non-Proliferation Treaty. In 2011, the New START came into effect, continuing the reduction of the U.S. and Russia's nuclear arsenal. Since then there has been an increase in political leaders in Japan requiring the assurance of the U.S. extended deterrence. The Japanese are looking at their current security environment with China and North Korea, China being one of the Nuclear Weapon States and North Korea being the only country to have withdrawn from the NPT.

There is no exact number or factor stated used to determine how much the U.S. umbrella must shrink to cause Japan to seek a nuclear option. Unclassified research does not show a specific number of nuclear missiles that the U.S. must maintain for Japan, or any country under the extended deterrent umbrella, to feel secure from potential threats. There are signs that show that Japan does have concerns when the U.S. has made changes to either its nuclear policy or nuclear arsenal. In an interview conducted by Maria Rost Rublee, a Japanese defense expert claimed that the best way to stop Japan from seeking a nuclear option would be for the U.S. to maintain the security alliance with Japan.<sup>53</sup> Maria Rost also noted that this does not mean a nuclear capable deterrent. She noted that

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<sup>52</sup>Katsuhisa Furukawa, "Japan's Policy and Views on Nuclear Weapon: A Historical Perspective," *Jebat: Malaysian Journal of History, Politics & Strategic Studies* 37 (2010): 2-3.

<sup>53</sup> Maria Rost Rublee, "The Future of Japanese Nuclear Policy." *Strategic Insights* 8, no. 2 (2009): 7.

conventional forces could supplement the nuclear option.<sup>54</sup> Some researchers also believe that a reduced nuclear umbrella could have a negative effect. This was argued in a 2007 study by the State Department's International Security Advisory Board (ISAB). The study concluded that "nuclear umbrella security agreements, whether unilateral or multilateral, have been, and are expected to continue to be effective deterrents to proliferation." The report also stated, that "there is clear evidence in diplomatic channels that U.S. assurance to include the nuclear umbrella have been, and continue to be, the single most important reason many allies have foresworn nuclear weapons."<sup>55</sup> The ISAB believed that "a lessening of the U.S. nuclear umbrella could very well trigger a cascade in East Asia and the Middle East."<sup>56</sup> The cascade effect included Japan, South Korea, and Taiwan. The report also maintained that the security assurance provided could be considered in terms of more than just nuclear weapons, and the strength could be seen in the form of troops and money spent on other offensive and defensive programs.<sup>57</sup> Of note, although there is a sentiment that deterrence may require nuclear missiles, there is also a thought that a deterrent does not require them. However, a deterrent of some means must exist. For instance, during an international nonproliferation conference, Ambassador Yukio Satoh, from the Japan Institute of International Affairs, stated "Strategically, Japan's adherence to the Three Non-Nuclear Principles depends largely, if not solely, upon the credibility of the Japan-U.S. Security Treaty, or more specifically, the credibility of the United States' commitment to provide deterrence for Japan."<sup>58</sup>

## **2. The Changing Security Environment**

Japan's changing security environment mainly focuses on China and North Korea's conventional and nuclear forces. Both countries have steadily increased their

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<sup>54</sup> Ibid.

<sup>55</sup> U.S. Department of State International Security Advisory Board, Report on Discouraging a Cascade of Nuclear Weapons States, 19 October 2007, 23.

<sup>56</sup> Ibid

<sup>57</sup> Ibid

<sup>58</sup> Sagan, Scott Sagan et al., "Are the Requirements for Extended Deterrence Changing?" Conference, Carnegie International Nonproliferation Conference, April 6, 2009.

conventional forces. China is one of the NWS under the NPT and North Korea has renounced the treaty and developed its own nuclear weapons program.

**a. *China's Conventional Forces***

David Shambaugh wrote that most, if not all, of the modernization in equipment, personnel, and doctrine is due to what China has seen as changes in threats in the region.<sup>59</sup> As China is a growing hegemon in the Asian region, it is at continued odds with the United States. After the Sino-Soviet split, China lost a major ally and support for modernization. China has been an ally of North Korea in an effort to stop the United States from moving closer to its borders.<sup>60</sup> Although with North Korea removing itself from the Non-Proliferation Treaty and making threats to use nuclear weapons, China may be drawn into a war it does not wish to be in at this time. In addition, mainland China wants to reclaim Taiwan, but the United States has a mutual defense treaty with the island. China is not fully prepared to get into a war with the U.S. at this time. It is important to understand China's conventional forces and their perception of the region. Maria Rost Rublee believed Japan sees China's conventional forces as a long-term problem for security only balanced by the U.S.-Japan alliance. She argued that Japan also sees the country as a potential adversary for its relationship with the U.S.<sup>61</sup> An interview she conducted with a defense expert showed that Japan may seek a nuclear option if the U.S. were to side with China, although it would not be immediate or likely.<sup>62</sup> China sees Japan's alliance with the U.S., as part of the United States' hegemonic push into the region. There have been realist arguments made that some states may seek a nuclear option and forgo development in conventional forces as way to "achieve effective parity against a stronger nation."<sup>63</sup> If the U.S. were to abandon Japan, or if the Japanese were to

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<sup>59</sup> David Shambaugh, *Modernizing China's Military: Progress, Problems, Prospects* (University of California Press), p 284–327.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Maria Rost Rublee, "The Future of Japanese Nuclear Policy" *Strategic Insights* 8, no. 2 (2009): 5

<sup>62</sup> Ibid.

<sup>63</sup> Sonali Singh and Christopher R. Way, "The Correlates of Nuclear Proliferation: A Quantitative Test," *The Journal of Conflict Resolution* 48, no. 6 (December 2004), 863

believe that the U.S. was not maintaining a credible deterrent for conventional forces, Japan may seek nuclearization to ensure parity with China's conventional forces.

***b. China's Nuclear Weapon's Program***

China has a nuclear weapons stockpile of approximately 240 nuclear weapons, including Intercontinental Ballistic Missiles (ICBMs), intermediate-range Ballistic Missiles (IRBMs), short-range Ballistic Missiles (SRBM), medium-range ballistic Missiles (MRBMs), submarine-launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBM), and strategic bombers.<sup>64</sup> The purpose of China's nuclear modernization program is to make an effective deterrent with changes to its security environment. These changes include the shift in the United States nuclear posture, an increase in nuclear weapon states in the East Asian region (North Korea), and the U.S. development of ballistic missile defense (BMD) capabilities.<sup>65</sup> After China's first nuclear test, leaders of the Liberal Democratic Party (of Japan) wanted to revisit the country's stance on nuclear weapons. Prime Minister Sato, recommended that Japan would need to have a nuclear deterrent if Communist China also had the weapons.<sup>66</sup> His views would change later in the form of the four nuclear principles. Ariana Navarro Rowberry wrote that although China's nuclear arsenal is somewhat modest, the modernizing of their nuclear forces are a cause for concern and an important factor in the changing threat perception for Japan.<sup>67</sup> Ambassador Yukio Satoh even stated that there were three sources of nuclear threat to Japan, the first one being nuclear weapon states in the East Asian region to include China.<sup>68</sup> Although, he believed that a country like China "would make rational strategic

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<sup>64</sup> Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, *Strategy in the Second Nuclear Age: Power, Ambition, and the Ultimate Weapon* (Washington, DC: Georgetown UP, 2012), 64–68.

<sup>65</sup> Katsuhisa Furukawa et al., *The Long Shadow: Nuclear Weapons and Security in the 21st Century*, (Stanford University Press, 2008), 9.

<sup>66</sup> James L. Schoff, *Strategy in the Second Nuclear Age*, (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012), 102

<sup>67</sup> Ariana Navarro Rowberry, "Advanced Conventional Weapons, Deterrence and the U.S.-Japan Alliance." Washington, DC: Brookings, December 2014

<sup>68</sup> Sagan, Scott Sagan et al., "Are the Requirements for Extended Deterrence Changing?" Conference, Carnegie International Nonproliferation Conference, April 6, 2009.

calculations,” he believed that negotiations would assist in reducing this threat.<sup>69</sup> His opinion was that the U.S. would need to maintain a credible deterrence for its allies [Japan] as long as other countries maintain a nuclear threat.

**c. *North Korea’s Conventional Forces***

The Korean People’s Army (KPA) comprises the military forces of North Korea, the sixth largest military in the world. The five branches of the KPA are the Ground Force, Navy, Air Force, Strategic Rocket Forces, and Special Operation Force. Some see North Korea’s conventional forces as a potential threat to Japan. The Asahi Shimbun was noted as saying, “Some believe the threat posed to Japan by North Korea means that nuclear weapons should also serve to deter biological and chemical weapon strikes.”<sup>70</sup> While biological and chemical weapon are their own type of warfare, this statement does show that some Japanese politicians do know of the deterring factor of a nuclear arsenal.

**d. *North Korea’s Nuclear Weapon’s Program***

North Korea’s nuclear weapons program presents a new and potentially perilous dynamic among the Northeast Asian states. After North Korea’s withdrawal from the NPT, North Korea became a nuclear state in 2006. With its continued experimentation and increased success, many experts fear a domino effect in the development of nuclear arms in the region. As the global response to North Korea’s development of nuclear weapons was insufficient in stopping the advancement of North Korea’s program, other nations may be encouraged to cancel participation in the NPT.<sup>71</sup> These states will economically prepare for sanctions in advance, as they build their own nuclear programs. If another nation, like Japan, Taiwan, or South Korea, were to withdraw from the NPT, other nations in the region would feel compelled to engage in their own programs to show strength and create a deterrent from their neighbors. In the past, South Korea and

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<sup>69</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>70</sup> *Asahi Shimbun* Online in English, 16 April 2010, available in [opensource.gov](http://open-source.gov), JPP20100416969012. Cited in David Yost, ‘US Extended Deterrence in NATO and the Asia-Pacific.’, 28

<sup>71</sup> Michael Elleman and Emily Werk, “Can a North Korean ICBM Be Prevented?” *Arms Control Today*, (May 2016), 16.

Taiwan conducted experiments in processing plutonium. In addition, Japan has a stockpile of plutonium available for weapon production if motivated.

Beyond proliferation of nuclear arms in the region, North Korea's nuclear program has other implications. One is North Korea's determination and resilience. Nations have issued sanctions in response to North Korea's nuclear testing. An example of the sanctions against North Korea by just a single nation, Japan, include restricting North Korean imports, preventing entry of North Korean citizens, and closing ports to North Korean ships.<sup>72</sup> Japan also led the charge for the UNSC to pass a resolution denouncing the July 2006 missile test. In addition, Japan froze North Korean bank assets. The U.S. military continues conducting inspections of North Korean cargo ships with the assistance of Japanese forces. Other nations have enacted similar sanctions. North Korea's continued testing of nuclear weapons despite these heavy sanctions limiting their economic growth and trade networks is a demonstration of its determination. Therefore, it is reasonable to infer that Pyongyang's nuclear arsenal will only increase in potency.

North Korea's nuclear weapons program has been one of the factors that could lead Japan to pursuing a nuclear option.<sup>73</sup> There are some who see the nuclear development as an issue for Japan. Prime Minister Sato even said that having the "will that we can do it ourselves" would be important if North Korea developed nuclear weapon.<sup>74</sup> A poll conducted by Dong-A Ilbo found that 80 percent of the Japanese people maintained an unfavorable opinion with regard to North Korea, 57 percent saw the country as the most threatening to Japan's security, and 85 percent felt threatened by North Korea's nuclear development.<sup>75</sup> In his book *The Evolution of the Nuclear Strategy*,

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<sup>72</sup> Emma Chanlett-Avery et al., *Japan-U.S. Relation: Issues for Congress* (CRS Report No. RL33436) (Washington, DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, 2015), 11, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33436.pdf>.

<sup>73</sup> James L. Schoff, "Changing Perception of the Extended Deterrence in Japan," *Strategy in the Second Nuclear Age*, ed. by Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012), 102.

<sup>74</sup> Sam Jameson, "Foreign Minister Says Japan Will Need Nuclear Arms If North Korea Threatens," *Los Angeles Times*, July 29, 1993.

<sup>75</sup> "Dong-A Ilbo Opinion Poll: Special Research on Japanese Attitudes toward China and Other Nations," The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://mansfieldfdn.org/program/research-education-and-communication/asian-opinion-poll-database/dong-a-ilbo-opinion-poll-special-research-on-japanese-attitudes-toward-china-and-other-nations/>



Lawrence Freedman wrote that North Korea saw Japan as a security concern and part of the reason the country developed nuclear weapons.<sup>76</sup> North Korea was even adamant about Japan participating in the six-party talks, saying that Japan should be dealt with “arms, not words.”<sup>77</sup>

One would be inclined to agree with Maria Rost Rublee that Korea is a short-term threat for Japan, but if a nuclear attack were to come from North Korea it would increase the potential for Japan to seek a nuclear option.<sup>78</sup> The main actions that Japan has done in the past in regard to North Korea’s nuclear development have been to push for further discussion on having a nuclear option, upholding the three non-nuclear principles, and to seek reassurance and continue to rely on the extended deterrence provided by the U.S. One can assume that if North Korea were to continue to proliferate that sanctions would increase. In the case of Japan, the country’s continued push for the U.S. to reassure the country of the stability of the extended deterrence shows that that North Korea is a factor in its decision-making process. Japan’s decision to follow the three non-nuclear Principles is based largely on the U.S. extended deterrence. If North Korea continued to proliferate, or had no intention of decreasing its nuclear arsenal, and the United States extended deterrence shrank below what Japan considered reliable, it would be reasonable to assume that Japan would choose to proliferate on its own.

## **E. CONCLUSION**

In the previous chapter, this paper explained why some countries chose the nuclear option. One of the principal factors being security concerns. Japan has some security concerns in the form of North Korea’s and China’s conventional and nuclear forces. Also, there is the concern over the shrinking U.S. nuclear umbrella as some of Japan’s adversaries are maintaining a nuclear force. Domestic and political factors will be the leading factors for Japan choosing to not to go down this path. In the past, speaking

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<sup>76</sup> Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2003), 446.

<sup>77</sup> “North Korea Says ‘Arms, Not Words’ Appropriate for Dealing with Japan,” Agence-France Presse, October 11, 2003.

<sup>78</sup> Maria Rost Rublee, “The Future of Japanese Nuclear Policy,” *Strategic Insights* 8, no. 2 (2009): 7.

about a nuclear weapon was considered taboo, but the debate continues to arise when there are changes in these factors. The next chapter will cover political debates in Japan, to see if the country has chosen the side of norm or security in the past. It will argue that when Japan felt the need, it would amend or reinterpret policies when faced with a security dilemma.

## **IV. HAS JAPAN CHANGED IN THE PAST?**

### **A. INTRODUCTION**

This chapter will discuss three cases where Japan had to choose between making changes to policies in favor of a more robust military capability or maintaining its current military stance. Although there are many cases that could be broken down into the debate of norms versus security, these were chosen because they each represent a significant change in the military or policies. The first case study will be the establishment of the Japanese Self-Defense Force. After WWII, Japan was left with no standing military to protect its borders. It was believed that under Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution the country could not possess the ability to maintain a military. This thought process would change when the country was faced with the threat of North Korea. The next case will be the deployment of the SDF to Iraq. This will show how the government of Japan used the issue as a way to extend the reach of the SDF. The government was able to send troops despite public opposition. It would also be the first time Japan would have troops in a combat zone since the end of WWII. The final case will be the Japanese move into Ballistic Missile Defense (BMD). This case goes into the definition of collective self-defense. The cases suggest that overall, Japan does look at security and its environment as factors in determining what it will do when faced with a decision to increase its military capability, but other variables can affect the decisions of the country.

### **B. CASE STUDY I: THE ESTABLISHMENT OF THE SDF**

#### **1. How the SDF Came to Be**

After its defeat in World War II, Japan would give up its ability to be a military power. The Supreme Commander of Allied Powers would create a group to draft Japan's new constitution. The new constitution, sometimes known as the pacifist constitution, came into effect in May of 1947. As mentioned in chapter one, Article 9 of the Japanese constitution rescinded Japan's sovereign right to war and did not allow the country to

maintain “land, sea, and air forces, as well as other war potential.”<sup>79</sup> As some would argue, such as Prime Minister Shigeru Yoshida, this removed Japan’s ability to defend itself through war. When asked during the 90<sup>th</sup> Diet session, Yoshida replied

Regarding the article of the draft constitution concerning renunciation of war, it looks as though you think war based on the self-defense right of the state is justifiable, but I think it is harmful to admit such a thing. Most wars have been fought in the cause of self-defense, so that it is better to wage no war at all in any cases. To acknowledge and justify a war in self-defense would only serve to invite another war and would be harmful and unprofitable.<sup>80</sup>

As North Korean forces moved into South Korea, Japan would begin to have concerns over its defense. In 1950, General MacArthur, who had already stated he did not believe that Article 9 prohibited Japan’s right to self-defense, sent a letter to Prime Minister Yoshida. The letter would direct the government of Japan to establish the National Police Reserve (NPR).<sup>81</sup> Yoshida would state that the purpose of the NPR was to keep peace and not for military purposes. The NPR would handle internal issues while, under Article 1 of the Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan, the U.S. would contribute the international security of Japan. Under the Security Treaty, Japan was required to continue to increase its own defense in an effort to assume more responsibility in defending against aggression.<sup>82</sup> This would be further emphasized in Article VIII of the Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement.<sup>83</sup> The NPR would be reorganized to the National Safety Force in 1952, which would be reorganized again in 1954. In 1954 the Self Defense Force (SDF) would be established, being divided into three branches. The three components are the Ground Self Defense Force (GSDF), the

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<sup>79</sup> James L. McClain, *Japan: A Modern History*, (New York: W.W. Norton & Company, Inc., 2002), 540

<sup>80</sup> Cited in Sayuri Umea’s The Law Library of Congress, *Japan: Article 9 of the Constitution*, (February, 2006), 9.

<sup>81</sup> Thomas French, *National Police Reserve: The Origin of Japan’s Self Defense Forces*, (Boston: Lieden, 2014), 79.

<sup>82</sup> “Security Treaty Between the United States and Japan,” accessed July 6, 2016, <https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/1338721/us-japan-security-treaty-1951.pdf>.

<sup>83</sup> “U.S. and Japan Mutual Defense Assistance Agreement,” accessed July 6, 2016 <http://www.learner.org/workshops/primarysources/coldwar/docs/usjapan.html>.

Maritime Self Defense Force (MSDF), and the Air Self Defense Force (ASDF). Since then Japan has continued to build up its forces to this day.<sup>84</sup>

## **2. What Were the Debates?**

The question then becomes what were some of the debates around the establishment of the Japan SDF? As was mentioned earlier, one of primary debates stemmed from if the SDF was constitutional, or if the force contradicted the idea of Article 9. In 1973 the District Court of Sapporo found that the SDF violated Article 9. A case in which the issues stemmed from a surface to air missile base being built. Residents of the area did not agree with the base being built on a forest preserve and challenged the constitutionality of the SDF. The government would argue that the SDF was not for the purpose of war and that all countries have the right of self-defense.<sup>85</sup> Public opinion of the SDF was mainly positive, especially in the ability of the SDF to support disaster relief operation inside the country.<sup>86</sup> Most of the Japanese people do not favor the SDF being used for combat operations, although they understand the need to be able to defend the country.

## **3. What Was the Outcome?**

Since its establishment 1954, the SDF has been deployed to Golan Heights, Indonesia, and Afghanistan for peacekeeping operations. While they showed the ability of the SDF to be used outside of the country, there were still guidelines and restrictions in place to maintain the pacifist ideology of the force. The debates over the SDF have caused the passing of several laws to include the Regional Contingency Security Law, revising the 1954 Self Defense Force Law, and continued debate over revising the constitution.<sup>87</sup> At first, the issue of self-defense was at the forefront of the debate, but then a shift to Japan taking a larger role not only in its own defense, but in international

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<sup>84</sup> Louis D. Hayes, *Introduction to Japanese Politics*, (Armonk: East Gate, 2009), 260–261.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 259.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 267.

<sup>87</sup> John P. Oberle, “Japanese-U.S. Missile Defense: Stepping Stone Towards Normalization,” M.A. thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2005, 15.

operations would take place. The establishment of the SDF shows that when Japan was faced with an external threat it would choose to build a more robust military. Also, when debate rose over whether the SDF was legal, the government would argue that the primary purpose of the SDF was just for defense. This could come into play if Japan were to choose a nuclear option. Public opinion has not moved in support of nuclear weapons, and the weapons could be argued unconstitutional. Just like with the establishment of the SDF, the government of Japan could make the argument that the weapons are for defense purposes only.

## **C. CASE STUDY II: SENDING THE SDF TO IRAQ**

### **1. How Did This Come About?**

During the Gulf War, Japan had been criticized for its “checkbook diplomacy” in which the country contributed financial support but did not send any troops. This would play a factor in the country’s choice to send troops to Iraq in 2004. Debates on issues would rise out of this event to include “1) the continued efficacy of the renunciation of the use of force; 2) the importance of contributing manpower to the international community in times of crisis; 3) a more equitable division of roles and missions within the U.S. -Japan alliance; and 4) the desirability of a more independent foreign policy.”<sup>88</sup> The SDF’s missions were expanded in the new National Defense program to include disaster relief and international peace keeping.

After the attacks of September 11, 2001, the United States would send troops to Iraq. On the day of the attack Prime Minister Koizumi would look to support the “war on terror,” by establishing the Iraq Response Team. The group would conclude that under the current Peace Keeping Operations Law, they could not justify deploying the SDF. Koizumi would then call for the law to be redrafted. The new law would restrict SDF personnel to noncombat zones and allowed for support in logistics and intelligence.

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<sup>88</sup> Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 68.

## **2. What Were the Debates?**

Once again, the issue of Article 9 came up. The debate being that the constitution allowed for “minimum necessary force,” but did not allow for forces to be sent abroad and for collective self-defense. Another concern was the possibility of sending troops into combat zones. The majority of the public believed that the SDF was primarily for disaster relief. A survey conducted in 2004 showed that 46.8 percent believed that the current level of support the SDF was giving in support of peace keeping operation was sufficient.<sup>89</sup> Only 22.2 percent of those people felt they should do more, while 17.7 percent felt they should participate at a minimum level.<sup>90</sup> Prime Minister Koizumi not only used the fear of North Korea, but the abandonment of the U.S. to gain support for sending troops into Iraq.<sup>91</sup>

## **3. What Was the Outcome?**

The decision was made to dispatch 1,000 troops to Iraq in 2004. The personnel were defended by British and Dutch forces due to the fact they were not permitted to use force. They were only there for building structures such as hospitals, roads, and water treatment facilities.<sup>92</sup> In the case of the sending troops to Iraq, the government of Japan did not change a policy based on security, rather on a need to be more involved in world affairs, and trying to remove its past criticism of having only “checkbook diplomacy.” The country would show that it had the will to take a larger role in the alliance with the U.S. Although, Minister Koizumi was able to use the fear of the U.S. isolating Japan and leaving the country to deal with its own defense, it was not the primary factor in changing policy. Shirzad Azad believed that Japan’s foreign policy toward the Persian Gulf and

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<sup>89</sup> “Public Opinion Survey on the Diplomacy by the Cabinet Office of Japan,” The Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation, accessed February 22, 2017, <http://mansfieldfdn.org/?s=Public+Opinion+Survey+on+the+Diplomacy+by+the+Cabinet+Office+of+Japan>.

<sup>90</sup> Ibid.

<sup>91</sup> Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 98

<sup>92</sup> Ibid

Saddam's Iraq were factors that also contributed to Japan sending troops to the region.<sup>93</sup> When faced with pressure from outside factors to contribute to the Iraq War, Japan moved from what the country normally did and sent troops. The government of Japan could do the same if it were to pursue a nuclear option in the future. Koizumi used the fear of U.S. abandonment to help gain support for sending troops to Iraq. A diminishing U.S. nuclear umbrella could be seen as the same, and used to help gain favor for a nuclear option for Japan.

#### **D. CASE STUDY III: JAPAN AND BALLISTIC MISSILE DEFENSE**

##### **1. What Led to the Japanese Interest in BMD?**

Japan's interest in missile defense programs dates back to the mid-1980s, but the 1998 launch of the Taepo Dong-1 is what led to political talks about ballistic missile defense. The missile showed that it was possible for a perceived threat to reach the shores of Japanese land, and even with the public knowledge of the U.S. promised defense of the country, that threat may be willing to do it. The demonstration showed the vulnerability of the Japanese to a possible attack from North Korea. After this demonstration, the Japanese Security Council would collaborate with the U.S. on research of Navy Theatre Wide Defense. Japan has specific threats in regard to ballistic missile defense. The threat of Japan and U.S. forces being targeted by North Korea, China, and Russia as well as non-state actors and terrorist are two mentioned by the authors of *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense*.<sup>94</sup>

##### **2. What Were the Debates?**

In *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense*, the authors noted that there were many benefits to Japan acquiring its own BMD system. The first benefit being the ability of Japan to counter potential threats from countries such as China and North Korea. Secondly, increasing the defense of Japan also increases the defense of U.S. troops in

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<sup>93</sup> Shirzad Azad, "Japan's Gulf Policy and Response to the Iraq War," *The Middle East Review of International Affairs*(MERIA) 12, no. 2 (June 2008): 1.

<sup>94</sup> Michael D. Swaine, Rachel M. Swanger and Takashi Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 11.



Japan. The authors believed that this would cause the U.S. to want to increase its defense of Japan as the U.S. would see Japan as an even greater asset. Finally, Japan investing in BMD could help in counter proliferation efforts.<sup>95</sup>

There is also the debate on collective self-defense in which Japanese politicians have argued that Article 9 does not allow for collective self-defense. Collective self-defense is a security agreement in which one party believes that a threat to another is a threat to all. With this ideology, one nation is allowed to defend another even if the former is not the target of the adversary of the latter. Japan has long interpreted Article 9 to only allow for the defense of Japan, Japanese assets, and Japanese personnel. This is seen in the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty in which the U.S. is required to come to the aid of Japan if an attack occurs on Japanese land, but the Japanese have no obligation to do the same.<sup>96</sup>

Defense Agency Director-General Gen Nakatani even stated that Japan could not provide military backing to another country unless Japan were under attack itself, which would lead to Japan having to no longer partake in the U.S. missile defense program.<sup>97</sup> His interpretation of Article 9 and collective self-defense did not allow for this sort of support. Some critics would argue that it may be impossible to determine which country was being targeted by an adversary's missile, and if intercepted by Japan, could place the country in a position that it did not intend to be in.<sup>98</sup> On the other side of the argument, officials such as Director General Shigeru Ishiba believes that the only issue is whether the country had the right to defend itself against a ballistic missile. He would be supported by Osamu Akiyama, who argued that it did not matter whether Japan was the intended target of a ballistic missile, but if the country judged a missile to be a threat they

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<sup>95</sup> Ibid., 12

<sup>96</sup> "Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between Japan and the United States of America," Ministry of Foreign Affairs, accessed July 6, 2016, <http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/n-america/us/q&a/refl.html>.

<sup>97</sup> David Fouse, "Japan Gets Serious About Missile Defense: North Korean Crisis Pushes Debate," *Asia-Pacific Security Studies* 2, no. 4 (2003): 2

<sup>98</sup> Ibid.

could apply the right to self-defense. This would make any interception of a ballistic missile constitutional.<sup>99</sup>

Of the political parties in Japan there is much debate over BMD. The Democrats and the Communist oppose BMD, believing that China and North Korea are not credible threats. The Komeito party, and pacifist party, believe that BMD constitute collective self-defense. The Komeito party also believes that BMD and continued involvement with the U.S. is provoking China and further destabilizing the region. To the public, the Liberal Democratic Party supports BMD. Although, there is some divide within the party.<sup>100</sup>

### **3. What Was the Outcome?**

In an effort to continue the pursuit of BMD capabilities the constitution was reinterpreted to allow for a different type of collective self-defense. Japan's current security policy allows for "limited" collective self-defense. Japan can intervene if "an armed attack against a foreign country that is in a close relationship with Japan occurs and as a result, threatens Japan's survival and poses a clear danger to overturn fundamentally its people's right to life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness, to ensure Japan's survival, and to protect its people."<sup>101</sup> Japan has also continued to increase the capabilities of its Aegis-Equipped destroyers with ballistic defense capability, and is working with the U.S. on an Advanced Ballistic Missile Interceptor.<sup>102</sup> Many Japanese officials support research and development in BMD capabilities due to the increasing threat of North Korea and China. This case could be one of the most significant in determining if security is more important than norms. It shows how when faced with an external threat Japan would choose to reinterpret a policy to actively pursue a more robust military.

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<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 3.

<sup>100</sup> Michael D. Swaine, Rachel M. Swanger and Takashi Kawakami, *Japan and Ballistic Missile Defense* (Santa Monica, CA: RAND Corporation, 2001), 56–60.

<sup>101</sup> "The Guidelines for Japan-U.S. Defense Cooperation." Ministry of Defense, accessed February 22, 2017, [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d\\_act/anpo/pdf/shishin\\_20150427e.pdf](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_act/anpo/pdf/shishin_20150427e.pdf).

<sup>102</sup> "Defense Programs and Budget of Japan: Overview of FY16 Budget," Ministry of Defense, accessed February 22, 2017, [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d\\_budget/pdf/280330.pdf/](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/d_budget/pdf/280330.pdf/)

## **E. CONCLUSION**

When looking at the cases above, it is possible to infer that Japan does feel a need to reinterpret and revise some policies when faced with a threat and if the country wanted to produce its own defense capability. Another concern is the issue of being a more normalized country. This paper has focused on whether the people of Japan see military build-up, and to a further extent nuclear weapons, in conflict with Article 9 and the pacifist nature of the country. There now becomes the concept of a normalized military and what that means for Japan. As Japan is the only country to renounce its sovereign right of war this could be the other factor that pushes the country toward a nuclear option. In the last chapter, this thesis will discuss what is believed to be the option Japan will choose, why it would choose that option, and what are some of the possible outcomes.

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## V. WILL JAPAN CHOOSE THIS OPTION?

### A. WILL JAPAN GO DOWN THIS PATH?

The ultimate question becomes will Japan go down the proliferation path? The short answer, “Not yet.” Japan has many reasons to pursue a nuclear option such as an external threat and the decreasing of the U.S. nuclear umbrella. Japan has threats that seem plausible and seem to be worrying the country in the form of China and North Korea. According to the Japanese Defense White Paper, North Korea is “continuing development of Weapons of Mass Destruction, ballistic missiles, and nuclear weapons.” Also, the country has stated that it would use nuclear attacks against the U.S. and other countries.<sup>103</sup> North Korea has publicly identified Japan as a threat, and it was believed that the country’s nuclear weapons program was set into play because of its security environment.<sup>104</sup> Of all factors, this thesis would argue that North Korea’s actions would be a major item in determining if Japan would choose a nuclear option. China has increased activities in the South China Sea and Japan has been concerned about any future intensification that could occur. Also, the non-transparent buildup of Chinese forces is another concern for the country. China’s main priority is believed to be preventing an independent Taiwan and the country has been increasing its international presence.<sup>105</sup> While North Korea could be considered the most irrational of the two, in the eyes of Japan, China is viewed as the “greater strategic challenge.”<sup>106</sup>

The importance of the Japan-U.S. security alliance will play a major role in the future of Japan and whether or not the country will obtain nuclear weapons as Japan’s alliance with the U.S. is its most significant insurance against a nuclear threat. With each

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<sup>103</sup> “Defense of Japan 2016 (Annual White Paper), Ministry of Defense,” accessed February 22, 2017 [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/pdf/2016/DOJ2016\\_1-2-2\\_1st\\_0822.pdf](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2016/DOJ2016_1-2-2_1st_0822.pdf)

<sup>104</sup> Lawrence Freedman, *The Evolution of Nuclear Strategy*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2003), 446.

<sup>105</sup> “Defense of Japan 2016 (Annual White Paper), Ministry of Defense,” accessed February 22, 2017 [http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w\\_paper/pdf/2016/DOJ2016\\_1-2-2\\_1st\\_0822.pdf](http://www.mod.go.jp/e/publ/w_paper/pdf/2016/DOJ2016_1-2-2_1st_0822.pdf)

<sup>106</sup> Katsuhisa Furukawa, “Nuclear Arms Control and Disarmament: Views among Japan’s National Security Community,” *Security Challenges* 6, No. 4 (2010): 35.

case study presented one of the primary factors has been security. Under the Yoshida Doctrine, the country relied on this since World War II. As the security environment has changed, and the U.S. has made strides in not only decreasing its nuclear arsenal, but also in its military operations, Japan will seek to provide its own defense. Japan, although not completely out spoken about it, does show that it has concerns with the security provided by the U.S. When the credibility of the U.S. extended deterrence comes into question, Japan questions its nuclear posture.<sup>107</sup>

Japan has reviewed the constitution when issues have come up, and in some cases the country has re-interpreted portions of old ideas of the peace clause of the constitution. In the case of the establishment of the SDF, Japan made a re-interpretation of Article 9, claiming that it allows for the use of force for self-defense purposes. For BMD, it was argued that Article 9 could allow for limited collective self-defense, even though the purpose of the BMD program is for the defense of Japan.

One case highlighted the idea of Japan having a more normalized military and Japan's increasing nationalism. Research has shown that younger generations are showing an increase in this movement.<sup>108</sup> This movement could help right-wing politicians promote ideas of an independent military.<sup>109</sup> As for Japan having a more "normal" military, the country continues to engage in peace keeping operations while acquiring capabilities to modernize its forces. Therefore, one would conclude that the shrinking U.S. nuclear umbrella would not be the only factor that would push Japan to pursue a nuclear option. It would take that particular issue on top of North Korea continuing to proliferate and China continuing to build its conventional forces to a point that Japan would feel it needs its own nuclear arsenal to defend itself.

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<sup>107</sup> James L. Schoff, "Changing Perception of the Extended Deterrence in Japan," *Strategy in the Second Nuclear Age*, ed. by Toshi Yoshihara and James R. Holmes, (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2012), 102.

<sup>108</sup> Emma Chanlett-Avery et al., *Japan-U.S. Relation: Issues for Congress* (CRS Report No. RL33436) (Washington, DC: Office of Congressional Information and Publishing, 2015), 7, <https://fas.org/sgp/crs/row/RL33436.pdf>.

<sup>109</sup> Maria Rost Rublee, "The Future of Japanese Nuclear Policy," *Strategic Insights* 8, no. 2 (2009): 7.

## **B. HOW WOULD JAPAN PURSUE THIS OPTION?**

The country would have to either become a nuclear weapon state under the NPT or withdraw from the treaty. Under the NPT, Japan is not allowed to manufacture, receive, transfer, or control nuclear devices. Since Japan ratified the treaty the country has remained committed to nuclear arms reduction. Japan would have to amend, re-interpret, or abolish Article 9 of the Japanese constitution. Nothing shows that Japan has any intent of abolishing Article 9; therefore, it is very unlikely that it will happen. Japan has re-interpreted Article 9 in the past. At first the strict interpretation of Article 9 maintained that Japan did not even allow for the Self Defense Force. As mentioned before, Prime Minister Yoshida believed that Article 9 did not allow the country to wage war in self-defense. The Japanese government would later interpret the constitution to mean the country did have the right to self-defense and was able to maintain “minimum” armed forces. The definition of minimum would be based on the international situation. The Cabinet Legislative Bureau, whose job is deciding if any legislation proposed contradicts existing laws, has maintained that nuclear weapons are prohibited under Article 9 for their offensive capability, but may allow a minimum in pursuit of the country’s right to self-defense. As Llewelyn Hughes has noted, a significant amount of work has argued that nuclear weapons can lead to military constraint and there is a possibility that policy may change in favor of developing nuclear weapons.<sup>110</sup> The other option would be to interpret nuclear weapons to be for defensive purposes, as was the case with Japan obtaining a BMD capability. The Japan Defense Agency knew there would be constitutional constraints and would say that joint research was only for research and not development.<sup>111</sup> The Japanese would insist that BMD was purely for defensive and did not pose a threat to its neighbors.<sup>112</sup> Although, it would be hard to convince a country such as North Korea or China that the country is only trying to proliferate for defensive purposes. Domestic opinion would need to change. Many have

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<sup>110</sup> Llewelyn Hughes, “Why Japan will not Go Nuclear (Yet): International and Domestic Constraints on the Nuclearization of Japan,” *International Security* 31, no.4 (Spring, 2007), 85.

<sup>111</sup> Richard J. Samuels, *Securing Japan: Tokyo’s Grand Strategy and the Future of East Asia* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2007), 104.

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*, 174

pointed out that those that were affected by the nuclear attacks on Hiroshima and Nagasaki are decreasing over the years, but the nuclear allergy still exists in the minds of the people of Japan. Even with events such as China and North Korea's nuclear weapons test, polls have shown that public opinion against nuclear weapons continues to grow.<sup>113</sup> As shown previously, the Norms versus Security debate has led Japan to change when security has become a concern, but to not always move too far to one side of the argument. Norms have said to rely on the U.S. for protection, and caused public opinion to see nuclear weapons as taboo. The security side has pushed for more robust military with an increasing external threat. The debate would continue with the nuclear option on the table. The security side of the debate may see Japan seeking a nuclear option, but the norms side will not allow those that want a nuclear Japan to reach that goal so easily. We may see small changes in policy that will establish nuclear weapons for defensive purposes only.

### **C. WHAT COULD BE SOME OF THE CONSEQUENCES?**

Japan could become a stronger ally to the U.S. The U.S. has pushed for Japan to take a greater role in the defense of its country and supporting in the stabilizing of the East Asian region. Japanese intentions would be questioned in the international realm. The country has presented itself as a pacifist nation since the end of WWII. Another potential consequence of Japan pursuing a nuclear option is that an arms race may develop in the region. Christopher Hughes made the argument that Japan is in a "quiet" arms race with China.<sup>114</sup> He pointed out that Japan has been trying to match the Chinese air power, blue-water navy, and counter its ballistic missiles. North Korea, who already sees Japan as a threat, may feel the need to intensify its proliferation of nuclear weapons if Japan were to do the same. However, a nuclear Japan could also have a stabilizing effect in the region, potentially like the U.S. and Russia in the cold war. Basically, the countries may obtain more nuclear weapons, but never use them. With the research from

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<sup>113</sup> Llewelyn Hughes, "Why Japan Will Not Go Nuclear (Yet): International and Domestic Constraints on the Nuclearization of Japan." *International Security* 31, no. 4 (2007): 89.

<sup>114</sup> Christopher W. Hughes, "Japan's Military Modernisation: A Quiet Japan-China Arms Race and Global Power Projection Debate," *Asia-Pacific Review* 2, no. 1 (2009): 86.



this thesis I would argue that the more probable outcome would be that Japan choosing a nuclear option would lead to a nuclear arms race in the East Asian region, but no weapons would be fired as what happened in the Cold War. The scars from the nuclear attacks of WWII still linger in the country, China would not risk moving into a nuclear war with the U.S., and North Korea is still not likely to fire a weapon in the near future.

#### **D. CONCLUSION**

This thesis proposed that a decreasing nuclear arsenal and the changing security environment could be factors that play a major role in determining if Japan would pursue a nuclear option. However, based on the case studies presented it is still hard to determine if Japan will choose to go down this path. Security has been shown to be a key factor in determining what could lead Japan to pursue a more robust military. When Japan was deciding to form the SDF, the initial concerns were the issues on the Korean peninsula. Ballistic Missile Defense was another example where security was a concern, but also a concern of a decreasing deterrence provided by the U.S. The third case involving the decision to send the SDF to Iraq focused more on the idea of Japan having a “normal” military. Although, in each of the cases certain policies, such as Article 9 were re-interpreted to allow for an increase in capabilities. One conclusion regarding the nuclear question is that Japan will always continue to debate this option when a crisis or significant event occurs, and the U.S. will play a major role in determining Japan’s future.

In the view of the author, Japan would only pursue a nuclear option if the U.S. nuclear umbrella significantly reduced and if North Korea and China continued their trajectory with both their nuclear and conventional forces. Japan is already concerned with North Korea and China, but has relied on the continued support and reliability of the U.S. extended deterrence. The U.S. deterrence is weakening and becoming less reliable as it seems to not be affecting the actions of North Korea and China. The continued rise in military might of these two countries will create a greater threat to Japan. Based on what has been discovered with this research, security plays a factor in determining what

the government of Japan will do, and an external threat is a factor that has pushed Japan to pursue a more robust military.

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